

Mobilising to fight the scourge of violence against women and children

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Excerpts:

The latest public and media exposition of a series of grotesque incidents of rape, epitomized by the rape and murder of Anene Booysens in Bredasdorp, has further underlined one of the most serious challenges facing South African society...

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Much as the struggle to defeat violence against women and children has a moral dimension, but it cannot be won simply on this front. It will in the end be won in **organized struggles, led by the working class**, for the radical transformation of our socio-economic terrain. But even this struggle on its own will not succeed, unless premised on **the organization of women** as part of the overall struggle for radical socio-economic transformation.

In order to deal with this scourge it is important that the struggle against violence against women and children becomes an everyday people's struggles rather than something that is periodically highlighted when cases like those of Anene hit the media...

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In the light of the above, particular responsibility rests with the **voting district (VD)-based branches of the SACP**. These structures are closest to the households in our various communities, and the SACP is deliberately restructuring itself to get closer to our communities. **We also expect our branch cadres to actively participate in all the sectoral structures at local level**, and also ensure that the issue of women's struggles and dignity is placed at the centre of the activities of these structures. This is in fact the vanguard role that the SACP branch can play at local level.

It is also of absolute importance that we incorporate a strong component on women's struggles, patriarchy and transformation of gender relations into all of our political education activities. Dedicated pamphlets and guidelines must be developed to be studied and used by our own cadre. This will serve a double purpose of empowering our own cadres and well as educating them as some are not themselves innocent on these matters, as well as to develop a commissariat capable of educating communities broadly.

The history of the struggles against women's oppression as well as our own history of the struggle against apartheid tells us that this is a struggle that will be won through **hard work on the ground amongst our communities**. And it is only a principled co-operation between mobilized communities and state organs that will ultimately defeat the scourge of all forms of violence in our society, including violence against women.

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